

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

Paper for information:

Government Update on Nutrition Related Activities: Devolved Health Departments

Agenda item 10

Please see attached tabled paper for information.

Welsh Assembly Government

Food & Fitness Health Promotion Grant Scheme

A new community grant scheme has been made available. The aim of the Food and Fitness Health Promotion Grant Scheme is to provide financial support for community projects that encourage more active lifestyles and/or healthier eating within priority groups. The main target group for the scheme is people within socially disadvantaged communities. Within those communities organisations bidding for grant support may identify their own target groups based on local needs assessment. Initiatives targeted at infants, children and young people or at older people will be particularly welcomed.

Two levels of funding have been made available. Project grants of up to £25k per annum are available to Local Health Boards, Local Authorities, the National Public Health Service, voluntary sector or community sector organisations working in partnership with at least one other agency to develop key demonstration projects of up to 3 years duration in community or primary care settings. Small grants of up to £5,000 over a two year period are also available to health, youth, community and voluntary organisations which are already working with one of the priority groups, to develop projects of up to two year's duration in community or primary care settings. The closing date for bids was October 1st July and almost 200 applications are being processed.

Cabinet Sub-Committee on Children and Young People

Ministers have agreed that nutrition and exercise for children and young people should be one of three themes for delivering priority policies. A scoping paper will be presented at the cabinet sub committee meeting in November.

Breakfasts in Schools

As part of the Welsh Assembly Government's Manifesto and Forward Work Programme, it has been announced that during the lifetime of this Assembly, free school breakfasts will be provided for all children of primary school age. From September 2004 the first schools invited to take part in this initiative will be the (385) schools in Communities First areas. This will be extended to include all primary schools in a rolling programme by September 2006. A consultation document on the implementation of the scheme will be sent out to all relevant parties in Wales shortly.

Local Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategies

As part of the NHS reorganisation in Wales the five Health Authorities have been replaced with 22 Local Health Boards to give greater local control. Each of the Health Boards must work with its Local Authority to produce a Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategy. As part of the implementation of Food & Well Being (the nutrition strategy action plan) a checklist and guidance has been produced and distributed to ensure the inclusion of nutrition within local strategies.

Department of Health Social Service and Public Safety Northern Ireland

Members have previously been provided with details of the pilot Fresh Fruit in School Scheme in NI.

Early evaluation of the Scheme has shown that:

- Around 75% of schools are reporting the children are eating all or nearly all of the fruit delivered. Some children are bringing more fruit into school
- School staff have welcomed the scheme as a way of promoting healthy eating. It has also been used to support other aspects of the curriculum
- Wider benefits include a better atmosphere in class, children learning to share and siblings bringing in more fruit to school
- Almost all parental feedback was positive - there are also signs that children are eating more fruit at home.

Scottish Executive

Healthy Living Campaign

Results of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the Healthy Living Campaign (launched on 7th January 2003) show an encouraging response. As at 28th September, 43,593 people (1.1% of the Scottish adult population) had contacted the advice line or visited the website. Encouragingly, caller statistics in June revealed that almost half (43%) of the respondents to the telephone advice line and website were people in lower socio-economic groups. These statistics do not capture all those who are benefiting by responding to advice presented at point of contact at the website or those who have been prompted to take action as a result of seeing the advertising. Public awareness the Healthy Living TV advertising is high at 73% of the adult population. The Healthy Living apple logo is now recognised by 44% of the population.

The full impact will only become apparent over time through monitoring of Scotland's health at the population level. Following requests to the advice line from professionals, resources have been made available as bulk orders and supplied to GPs, dentists and pharmacies via their local NHS Health Promotion Dept.

There have been a wide variety of calls to the advice line. The highest number were from people looking for general healthy living advice. Other calls fell into three main categories - weight management, diet and health and basic food and food groups. Calls about these topics have been received in roughly equal numbers.

School Meals

A series of implementation seminars have taken place across Scotland for multi-agency teams involved in implementing Hungry For Success. Local authority catering, education, teachers, NHS nutritionists and dietitians were represented. A day for food industry representatives is planned for 6th November and will be led by Scottish Enterprise. Scottish nutrient standards for school meals have been adapted in line with SACN advice on salt. The Food Standards Agency Scotland has been developing product specifications for over 100 different manufactured products used in schools meals, The specifications set limits on the maximum total fat, saturated fat, sodium and sugar content. Final specifications are due to be published in late autumn. In preparing the product specifications the FSA have consulted with a wide range of food manufacturers and processors.

Free Fruit to P1 and P2

Funding for school fruit is part of the school meals "package"; sourcing of fruit is under the control of local authorities. All local authorities have received guidance from SE in consultation with the FSA.

Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care in Hospitals

NHS Quality Improvement Scotland has published (in September 2003) Clinical Standards for Food, Fluid and Nutritional Care in Hospitals. The report can be downloaded from the publications page of the NHSQIS website – www.nhshealthquality.org.

Breakfast Clubs

The SE breakfast services grant scheme required, as a condition of funding, that breakfast services follow the Scottish Community Diet Toolkit for successful breakfast clubs and include health promoting activity. Funding from the breakfast services grant scheme has now been awarded to Scottish local authorities.

Vitamin D

The report from the Vitamin D Working Group on provision of Vitamin D supplements to older people in long term care is currently subject to final review; implementation is expected to follow shortly.

Thiamine in Beer

As SACN was informed at the last meeting, the issue of thiamine fortification of beer has encountered a number of barriers. Reports of international experience are awaited before any further progress can be made.

Scottish Dietary Targets

The Working Group on Monitoring Progress Towards Scottish Dietary Targets has met on two occasions and is expected to report early next year.

Salt

As mentioned above, changes have been made to the nutrient specifications for school meals to bring them in line with SACN recommendations and product specifications which set levels for salt, fat and sugar in processed foods used in schools have been developed by the FSA. An FSA leaflet providing advice on salt has also been re-printed in collaboration with NHS Health Scotland with a new-look cover for inclusion in healthy living information packs.